

## M E R C A T O R :

O R,

## Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Thursday, April 8. to Saturday, April 10. 1714.

*We our selves the Causes of carrying our Wooll out of the Nation into France.**Why the French have made Improvements in our Manufactures now, and never did before.**The French have not Wooll in Quality, or in Quantity.**If they had it, why did they not work it formerly? If they had it not formerly, and have it now, when did they get it?**The Encouragement to their Manufactures has been our Wooll, and laying high Duties on our Goods.**As the Treaty takes those Duties off, and it is our Work to keep our Wooll from them, do both these and we put a stop to all the French Improvements when we please.*

**I**T is apparent in a few Words from what has been said, that the great reason of the carrying out of these Countries into France such great Quantities of Wooll is found to be in our selves, and the Opposers of the Treaty of Commerce, as it is now settled, are the only true OULERS, or Transporters of Wooll, let their new Foreigner turn'd Author for them defend them if he can.

That the French are very much encreased and improved in Woollen-Manufactures more than they were formerly, tho' nothing like what these Men pretend to is true, and no Body questions it.

The *MERCATOR* wishes some of the People on the other side, Foreigners or English, let them be who they will, or who can rather, would come to the Point, and without Preambulations and Circumlocutions, tell us the true Reason why, and Means how the French have made these Improvements just now, and never before.

That they were never before they must grant, otherwise they may not be called Improvements, and otherwise also, the great Quarrel at the Treaty of Commerce will be taken away. But they will not dispute that with us, their own Papers are full of it, that the French are prodigiously improved and encreased in their Woollen-Manufactures of late Years, that they are arrived at a great Perfection, &c. that they make as good as we do, that they undersel us, &c.

Now let them go back Historically; when did they begin it, and come on gradually? How did they proceed, let them enquire particularly what Methods did they Improve? By what Means Encrease? Was it that they had the Means, viz. the Materials before, but did not make use of them? Or was it that they have fallen into Methods to get the said Materials abroad, either where they did not get them before, or in greater Quantities from the same Places than they had before, or if they had their Materials, &c. for Manufacturing among themselves? Is it that they have greater Encouragements for

the sale of their Goods than they had before; and if so, whence are those Encouragements? All these Enquiries will appear useful in this Case; and if these Men could be ingenuous they would answer directly to them all, and put an end immediately to the Debate about the Bill of Commerce.

But since this is not to be expected from them in the Temper and on the Principles they now act from, the *MERCATOR* shall endeavour to state the Truth of Fact, as it lies as free from Difficulties as he can, and as little liable to the Cavils of his unfair Adversaries as may be.

1. It is most true, in spite of all Pretences to the contrary, that the French have not Wooll, fitting in Fineness, or sufficient in Quantity in the whole Kingdom of France for the making those Manufactures which we speak of, and which we say they are to out-do us about in any Quantity, capable to supply their own Demands, much less any foreign Trade.

If they have this Wooll, and have the Spinners and Weavers, and can make these Goods, where did they get it? Either they had it always, or but lately in themselves, or from abroad? If always in themselves, what did they do with it? Why never go to Work with it till now? Why never make Improvements till now? If they got it lately, when was it, and from whence? Let us know how it was, that what is alledged from it may have some Foundation, other than bare Affirmation without Proof, which in this Age will go down with no Body.

Now if it is true that they have not Wooll of their own, than all these mighty Improvements must be by Wooll gotten from other Nations; What they get from Spain, from Barbary, from Germany, and from Turkey we know, and the several Uses it is fit for we know, and all that they may do with that they might have done before, and therefore that Part cannot justly be called an Improvement.

But





But the Improvement must arise, either from their obtaining more Materials than they had before, to make larger Quantities with, or their obtaining some Advantage in the Market for the Vend of their Goods, than they had before; and both these are in our Case, and both are against the Opposes of the present State of our Commerce.

The Means of their Manufacturing is our Wooll, which they have found ways to procure in greater Quantities than ever; this lies upon us to take care of.

The Encouragement of their Manufacture has been, that they have from time to time obtain'd high Duties to be laid upon the English Manufactures, whereby they have at last as good as prohibited them; so that neither by the Goodness or Cheapness of the English, the Sale of the French might be hindred.

Let any one produce other Reasons for this if they can.

It is manifest, that without our Wooll they cannot go on; why else do they give such Prices, run such Hazards, and be at such Expences to get it from us?

It is as manifest also, that even with our Wooll they could make no considerable Progress in their Manufactures, or go on with Success, till partly by their own high Duties and partly by our foolish Prohibitions, they had shut our Manufactures out of their Markets. If it was not so, Why did they not do it before? Why not many Years or Ages before? For by the same Methods and Encouragements they might have gotten our Wooll from us then as well as now.

Let them Turn it and Twist it which way they will, it will be every way against them.

If you think your Wooll enables them, stop that, and keep it from them, as no doubt but many ways may be found to do.

If you find the keeping out our Manufactures from the French Markets, but on the payment of exorbitant Customs, is the Case; then why do you not accept of a Proposal to take those Duties off, and open the Trade again? But, say you, the Remedy is worse than the Disease; well then, why do you Complain? Let the French go on and make your Manufactures, undersell you and beat you out of the Trade also, nay, and Engross all the Trade of Europe, as certain of your grave Philosophers have said they bid fair to do, and if the Remedy is worse than that Disease, it is very hard.

In short; The only way then left us, as well to stop our Wooll from going into France as to stop the French Improvements in our Manufactures, is to have our Goods openly admitted into France on easie Terms, and on low Duties, that the Goodness and Cheapness of our Manufacture may, by its own Weight, overthrow and destroy the other, as it is plain it must and will do. This will Cheque their Improvements, and this alone will do it. If their Markets are spoiled, their Manufacturing will follow of course; if they come to bring their Manufactures to Market with ours, their Trade is gone, they will Decline as fast as they have Risen, and must sell very much Cheaper than we, or not sell at all; as is their Case now in all the foreign Markets where we meet with them.

When it is come to this, we shall find their Demand for our Wooll lessen of course; and add to this, all the possible Methods we may and ought to take to keep our Wooll entirely from them, and, at worst, to make it as Difficult and Dear to come at as possible. These are the plain Measures to reduce the French Trade, and put a stop to their Improvements in the Woollen Manufactures: For example,

Stopping our Wooll tends to making their Manufactures fall in Goodness for want of English Wooll to mix with their coarse hairy Stuff, or to make them rise in Price by the Difficulty and Dearness of getting English Wooll.

Both these, the Trade being open, gives the Advantage to the English Manufactures in the Markets of

France, which added to their own real Goodness and Cheapness, cannot fail to give them the preference in France, and overmatch the Manufactures they make; those Manufactures being so overmatched must sink in Quantity, and consequently the French not be so eager for our Wooll.

Thus stopping our Wooll will give our Manufactures an Advantage upon the Trade's being Opened, and Opening the Trade will assist us in keeping our Wooll at home, by making the French less eager for it, and less able to give such large Encouragements for the carrying it off.

The *MERGATOR* sees but one way for any Body to answer this, and it is confess'd it is a way, however hateful, yet much practis'd by our Opposers, (viz.) Giving the Lye to every thing by Lump, and roundly denying in the Gross whatever is said; as thus: The French have Wooll enough; The French have as good Wooll as the English; The French make as good Cloth as the English; The French Work cheaper than the English; The French can Undersell us; And the French will have all the Trade, tho' all the high Duties were taken off from our Goods, nay, tho' you were to have a Bounty given to carry them into France.

But if this were true, as every Word of it is abominably false, it were another Case: If their Wooll was as good as ours, why do they give such a Price for ours, even twice as much as we give ourselves? If they had enough of it, why do they ransack, as we may call it, all the Queen's Dominions for our Wooll? If they make as good Cloth and Cheap where is it? Why was there never a Frenchman, Lord Duke, Ambassador, or any thing that ever came here with a good Coat on his Back? Why do the Gentry and Nobility of France always make New Cloaths here when they go home again? If they are able to Undersell us, tho' all the high Duties on ours were taken away, why do they stickle so hard against taking them away? Indeed, why did they lay them on? And, which is still more, why do they continue to send for our Woollen Manufactures, notwithstanding the intolerable Duties of 70 per Cent. which they pay in France? As appears by the following Account.

**From the Custom-House.**

*Exported to France in Four Days,  
April 2, 3, 5, 6.*

- 20 Stuffs
- 41 Double Bays
- 20 Says
- 52 Serges
- 8 dozen Hose
- 4 Long Cloths
- 16 Short Cloths
- Certain Apparel
- 1244 lb. Carmenia Wooll
- 9320 lb. Cotton Wooll
- 2 Ton Kids Hair
- 45 Ton 19 C. Copperas
- 24 Ton 6 C. Allom
- 27 Ton 12 C. Logwood
- 4 Ton Fustick
- 22 Fodder 10 C. Lead
- 9 C. Elephants Teeth
- 500 lb. Myrrh
- 6 C. Gauls
- 108529 lb. Virginia Tobacco
- 10 Quarter Oatmeal
- 2 pair Smiths Bellows
- 10 dozen Whips
- 17 C. Wrought Iron
- 100 Glasses
- 2473 Fans
- 30 Gallons Canary

